

The Tragedy of Macbeth, Act II, by William Shakespeare**Reading Warm-up B**

Read the following passage. Pay special attention to the underlined words. Then, read it again, and complete the activities. Use a separate sheet of paper for your written answers.

Sitting in the middle of the serious community theater meeting, Kristen had to refrain from jumping up and down. The president had just trumpeted the news that she, Kristen, was the first-place winner in their talent contest—and that the prize was a full production of her original play.

For more than five years, Kristen had been a loyal member of the theater, painting scenery, putting up lights, sewing costumes, and serving refreshments. She was convinced that her loyal hard work and allegiance had finally paid off—her script was going to be performed. Of course, there was a risk someone might mock her cherished script, written over so many long nights and early mornings, but that was a chance Kristen was willing to take. She had faith that the people who attended the local theater did not have malice in their hearts, that they came, not to be mean, but to be entertained. She was sure they would find her play, *The Real Deal*, very entertaining.

The play centered on Barbara and Jim, a young couple who buy a house only to discover bundles of money hidden in the walls. Without questioning the source of the cash, the couple goes on a spree, spending recklessly. As they meet the neighbors, Barb and Jim—wondering who else knows the money is there—grow worried and retreat into a cloud of mistrust. Still, their passion for acquiring expensive things is not quenched, and they continue spending. Finally, after a terrifying break-in, Barb, using tears and arguments, persuades her husband to go to the police and reveal the secret behind their sudden wealth.

It appalls them to learn they are in debt and under arrest—the money they found was not the real deal after all. It was counterfeit.

Thinking about the ending of her play, Kristen chuckled; she was sure it would be a hit.

1. Underline the phrase that helps explain why Kristen decided to refrain from jumping. Explain what *refrain* means.
2. Circle the word that is a clue to the meaning of allegiance. Then, explain whether you think *allegiance* should be rewarded.
3. Circle the word that suggests that the word mock means something negative. Use *mock* in a sentence of your own.
4. Circle the phrase that is a clue to the meaning of malice. Then, rewrite the sentence using a synonym for *malice*.
5. Underline the phrase that shows that their desire is not quenched. Then, explain how a desire for things can be *quenched*.
6. Circle the words that tell what Barb uses when she persuades her husband. Explain what *persuades* means.
7. Underline the phrase telling what appalls them. Explain whether the fact that it *appalls* them makes sense.
8. Circle the phrase that suggests the opposite of counterfeit. Then, tell what *counterfeit* means.